/14 cont./

442 during which commercial operations in groundnuts are authorized.
654 It is opened and closed each year by governmental decree. In
438 general it begins at the end of November or the beginning of December and closes at the end of April. The date of opening the campaign is set about two months after the beginning of the harvest, in order to avoid premature uprooting and to favor
438 the reimbursement of the seed advanced. This system never-
442 theless leads to some smuggling in the south, because the
[439] navétanes, anxious to return home, and the peasants, without any money, are tempted to sell in Gambia. At the time of the close, the transactions have been over for a long time, but this decision prevents the eventual sale /15/ of the seed distributed by the Mutuelles. In order to have the commodity brought in gradually and to avoid heavy transactions at the beginning of trade, operations are suspended from Friday to Monday. Nevertheless by the end of the month of January nearly all of the harvest has been negotiated.

366 2) The "points of trade." Since 1932 the operations of
442 selling must take place in the localities called points of trade
438 or "escales" located on the railroad or a road (Circular of 13 July 1932). These points of trade, which were 175 in number in 1935, now number more than 300. The limitation, in 1932, on the number of the points of trade was a response to the desire to moderate the rhythm of the selling and to avoid the proliferation of intermediaries. The recent creation of new escales is
[244] devoted to the conquest of new lands and is an attempt to avoid the abuses of cultivation on the lands near the former points of trade.

The accession of a locality to the rank of escale makes
[369] it legally an urban center, with the obligation of division into lots /lotissement/ and, for the merchants, permanent buildings. The campaign is a period of great animation for the escale.
442 The merchants or traders open their bank of purchase or "factory."
437 Traditionally, intermediaries, or "masters of language," conduct
[492] the producer to the factory. The groundnuts, transported by don-
[488] keys and in bags loaned by the trader, are weighed and emptied

/15 cont./

442 437 [492] [488] [452] [443] [438] into the secco, an area with a floor of hard earth or cement, closed off by sheet metal. The agriculturalist, paid forthwith, immediately spends the sum received, in settling the sums owed to the trader and in buying from among the manufactured objects of the same factory the most diverse articles: cloth, playthings, articles for bicycles, etc. Thus the same trader realizes two profits in the traditional system.

3) The agents of trade. Until the Second World War, 439 441 442 438 the trade in groundnuts was in the hands of about 3,000 private traders organized in a strict hierarchy. At the top, the trade was controlled by the large import-export houses, especially of Bordeaux origin, Maurel et Prom, Peyrissac, Vézia, etc., to which was added the C. F. A. O. of Marseilles origin, and the S. C. O. A. Franco-Switzerland. These firms, whose central agencies for Senegal are in Dakar, make arrangements for the "banks" and "agencies" in the principal localities, for "factories" in the escales, and for "operations" in the bush. These commercial houses concentrate the purchases of their various traders and provide them with imported products. They are supported during the campaign by the banks of the mother country or their agencies in Senegal.

441 442 438 The independent French merchants, often former employees of the firms, play the role of intermediary /demi-grossiste/ in the escales. /16/ They buy directly from the producers or from the African sub-trader and bag and forward /the product/ to the commercial houses in the shipping ports. They have been very harshly affected by the economic crisis of the 1930's and then [563] by the war, in particular by the mobilization, which facilitated the establishment of many Lebano-Syrian traders.

The treaties of 1919 facilitated the arrival in Africa of [563] these Lebano-Syrians. They devote themselves essentially to commerce, and they have on the whole succeeded, because, living near the autochthons, they have adopted their way of life and are contented with much less than the independent 442 443 438 Europeans. During the trade, they are generally commission agents of the firm that they represent. They receive a commission for each metric ton of groundnuts purchased, and sell in